

# GRASSHOPPER ON THE ROAD



by  
ARNOLD LOBEL

An I CAN READ Book®





# GRASSHOPPER ON THE ROAD

ARNOLD LOBEL



HarperCollins e-books



*For Kohar Alexanian*





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Grasshopper wanted to go on a journey.

"I will find a road," he said.

"I will follow that road wherever it goes.

" One morning Grasshopper found a road.

It was long and dusty.

It went up hills and down into valleys.

"This road looks fine to me," said Grasshopper.

"I am on my way!"



# The Club



Grasshopper walked quickly along the road.  
He saw a sign on the side of a tree.  
The sign said MORNING IS BEST.  
Soon Grasshopper saw another sign.  
It said THREE CHEERS FOR MORNING.  
Grasshopper saw a group of beetles.  
They were singing and dancing.  
They were carrying more signs.  
“Good morning,” said Grasshopper.



"Yes," said one of the beetles.

"It is a good morning.

*Every* morning is a good morning!"

The beetle carried a sign.

It said MAKE MINE MORNING.

"This is a meeting of the We Love Morning Club,"  
said the beetle.

"Every day we get together to celebrate another  
bright, fresh morning.

Grasshopper, do you love morning?" asked the  
beetle.

"Oh yes," said Grasshopper.

"Hooray!" shouted all the beetles.

"Grasshopper loves morning!"

"I knew it," said the beetle.

"I could tell by your kind face.

You are a morning lover."



The beetles made Grasshopper a wreath of flowers.

They gave him a sign that said MORNING IS TOPS.

"Now," they said, "Grasshopper is in our club."

"When does the clover sparkle with dew?" asked a beetle.

"In the morning!" cried all the other beetles.







"When is the sunshine yellow and new?" asked the beetle.

"In the morning!" cried all the other beetles. They turned somersaults and stood on their heads. They danced and sang.

"M-O-R-N-I-N-G spells morning!"

"I love afternoon too," said Grasshopper.

The beetles stopped singing and dancing.

"What did you say?" they asked.

"I said that I loved afternoon," said Grasshopper.

All the beetles were quiet.

"And night is very nice," said Grasshopper.



"Stupid," said a beetle.  
He grabbed the wreath of flowers.  
"Dummy," said another beetle.  
He snatched the sign from Grasshopper.  
"Anyone who loves afternoon and night can never,  
never be in our club!" said a third beetle.

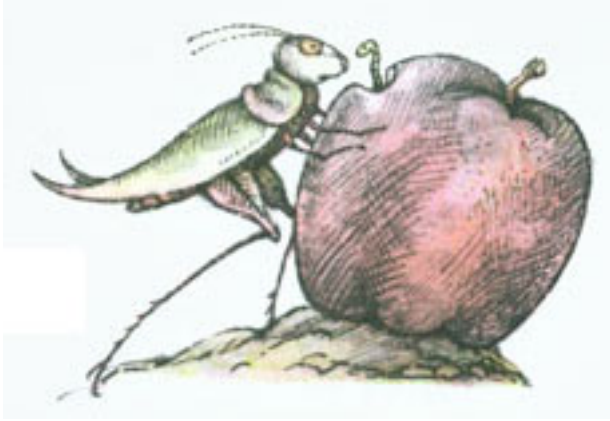


"UP WITH MORNING!" shouted all the beetles.  
They waved their signs and marched away.  
Grasshopper was alone.  
He saw the yellow sunshine.

He saw the dew sparkling on the clover.  
And he went on down the road.



## A New House



The road went up a steep hill.  
Grasshopper climbed to the top.  
He found a large apple lying on the ground.  
“I will have my lunch,” said Grasshopper.  
He ate a big bite of the apple.  
“Look what you did!” said a worm, who lived in the apple.  
“You have made a hole in my roof!”  
“It is not polite to eat a person’s house,” said the worm.  
“I am sorry,” said Grasshopper.  
Just then the apple began to roll down the road on the other side of the hill.  
“Stop me! Catch me!” cried the worm.  
The apple was rolling faster and faster.



"Help, my head is bumping on the walls!  
My dishes are falling off the shelf!" cried the worm.

Grasshopper ran after the apple.

"Everything is a mess in here!" cried the worm.

"My bathtub is in the living room.

My bed is in the kitchen!"





Grasshopper kept running down the hill.  
But he could not catch the apple.  
“I am getting dizzy,” cried the worm.  
“My floor is on the ceiling!  
My attic is in the cellar!”  
The apple rolled and rolled.  
It rolled all the way down to the bottom of the hill.





The apple hit a tree.  
It smashed into a hundred pieces.  
“Too bad, worm,” said Grasshopper.  
“Your house is gone.”



The worm climbed up the side of the tree.  
“Oh, never mind,” said the worm.  
“It was old, and it had a big bite in it anyway.  
This is a fine time for me to find a new house.”  
Grasshopper looked up into the tree.  
He saw that it was filled with apples.  
Grasshopper smiled, and he went on down the  
road.



# The Sweeper

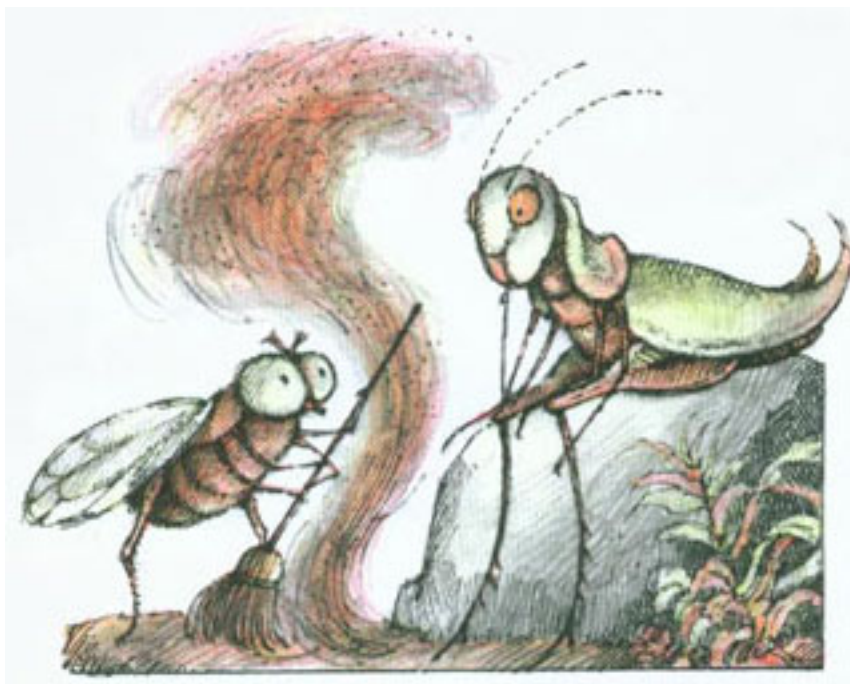


Grasshopper saw a cloud of dust.

“Clean, clean, clean,” said the housefly, who was sweeping the road.

“My broom and I will make this road as clean as can be.”

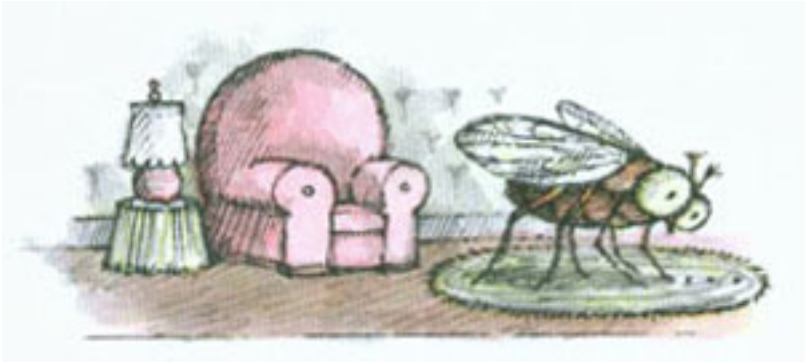
“Housefly,” said Grasshopper, “the road is not very dirty.”



"It is much too dusty," said the housefly.  
"It is covered with stones and sticks and other  
nasty things.  
My broom and I will brush them all away."



The housefly went on sweeping.  
“One day I was at home, not doing much of anything,” said the housefly.  
“I saw a speck of dust on my rug.  
I picked up the speck of dust.  
Next to it was another speck of dust.  
I picked up that one, too.”





“Next to that speck of dust was another speck of dust.

I ran and got my broom.

I swept up all the dust that was on my rug.

Then I saw a piece of dirt on my floor.

Next to it was another piece of dirt.

And next to that was another piece of dirt.

With my broom I swept up all the dirt that was on my floor.”





"I cleaned my whole house from top to bottom.  
I even washed my windows.  
After I washed them, I looked outside.  
I saw my garden path.  
There were ugly pebbles on my garden path.  
I rushed outside with my broom.  
I swept all the pebbles away."





At the end of the path was my gate.  
It was covered with mud and moss.  
I scrubbed all the mud and moss off my gate.  
I opened the gate and walked out onto this dusty,  
dirty road.”  
“I took my broom and went sweep, sweep, sweep  
up the road,” said the housefly.  
“You have worked very hard,” said Grasshopper.  
“I think that you should rest for a while.”  
“No, no, no,” said the housefly.  
“I will never rest.  
I am having a wonderful time.  
I will sweep until the whole world is clean, clean,  
clean!”



The dust was getting into Grasshopper's eyes.  
So he said good-bye to the housefly, and he went  
on down the road.

# The Voyage



Grasshopper came to a puddle of water in the road.

He was just about to hop over the puddle.

"Wait!" cried a tiny voice.

Grasshopper looked down.

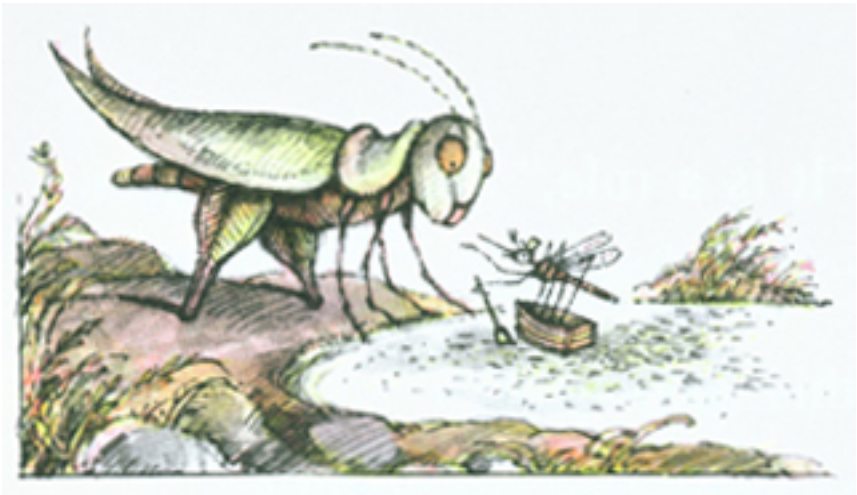
At the edge of the puddle was a mosquito.

He was sitting in a little boat.

"It is a rule," said the mosquito.

"You must use this ferry boat to get across the lake."

"But sir," said Grasshopper, "I can easily jump over to the other side."



"Rules are rules," said the mosquito.  
"Climb into my boat."  
"Your boat is too small for me," said Grasshopper.  
"Rules are rules," said the mosquito.

"You *must* get into my boat!"

"I can't fit into your boat," said Grasshopper.

"Rules are still rules!" shouted the mosquito.

"Well then," said Grasshopper, "there is only one thing for me to do."

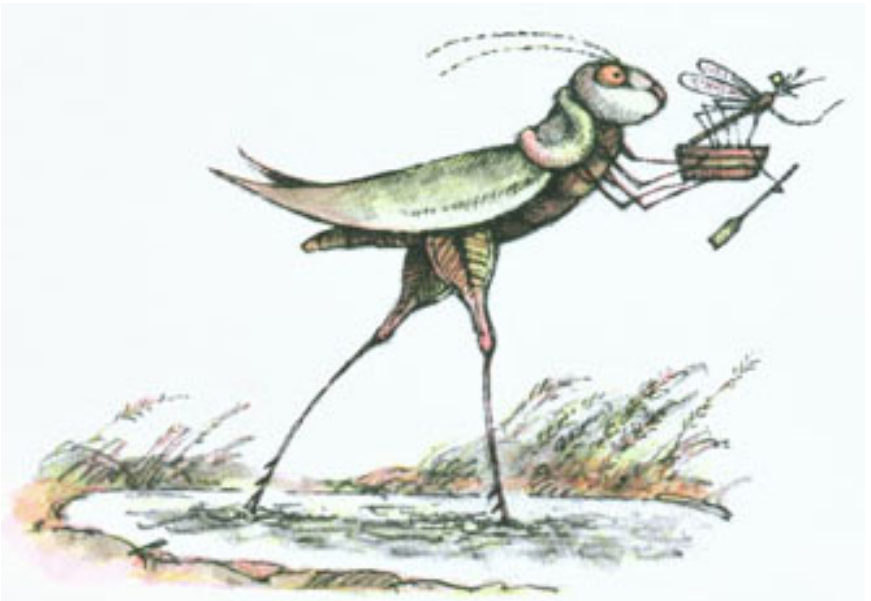
Grasshopper picked up the boat.





“All aboard,” called the mosquito.  
Grasshopper held the boat very carefully.  
He stepped into the puddle.  
“You are lucky to be with me on this voyage,” said the mosquito.  
“I have been sailing back and forth across this lake for many years,” said the mosquito.  
“I am not afraid of storms or waves.” Grasshopper took another step.





"I know more about sailing than anyone else around here," said the mosquito.  
Grasshopper took one more step.  
He was on the other side of the puddle.  
He put the boat down into the water.



"That was a good trip," said the mosquito.

"Now I must hurry back to the other shore to wait for new riders."

"Thank you," said Grasshopper.

"Thank you very much for taking me safely across the lake."

"I was glad to do it," said the mosquito.

Grasshopper waved good-bye and kept on walking down the road.



# Always



In the late afternoon Grasshopper saw a mushroom.

It was growing at the edge of the road.

"I will rest my feet," he said.

Grasshopper sat on the mushroom.

Three butterflies flew down.

"Grasshopper," said the butterflies, "you will have to move."

"Yes," said the first butterfly.

"You are sitting on our place.

Every afternoon at this time, we fly to this mushroom.

We sit down on it for a while."

"There are lots of other mushrooms," said Grasshopper.

“They will not do,” said the second butterfly.

“This is the mushroom we *always* sit on.”

Grasshopper got up.

The three butterflies sat down.



"Each and every day we do the same thing at the same time," said the third butterfly.

"We like it that way."

"We wake up in the morning," said the first butterfly.

"We scratch our heads three times."



"Always," said the second butterfly.

"Then we open and close our wings four times. We fly in a circle six times."





"Always," said the third butterfly.  
"We go to the same tree and eat the same lunch every day."



"Always," said the first butterfly.  
"After lunch we sit on the same sunflower.  
We take the same nap.  
We have the same dream."  
"What sort of dream?" asked Grasshopper.  
"We dream that we are sitting on a sunflower taking a nap," said the second butterfly.



“Always,” said the third butterfly.  
“When we wake up, we scratch our heads three more times.”



We fly in a circle six more times.”





"Then we come here," said the first butterfly.

"We sit down on *this* mushroom."

"Always," said the second butterfly.

"Don't you ever change anything?" asked Grasshopper.

"No, never," said the butterflies.

"Each day is fine for us."

"Grasshopper," said the butterflies, "we like talking to you.

We will meet you every day at this time.

We will sit on this mushroom.

You will sit right there.

We will tell you all about our scratching and our flying.

We will tell you all about our napping and our dreaming.

You will listen just the way you are listening now."

"No," said Grasshopper.

"I am sorry, but I will not be here.

I will be moving on.

I will be doing new things."

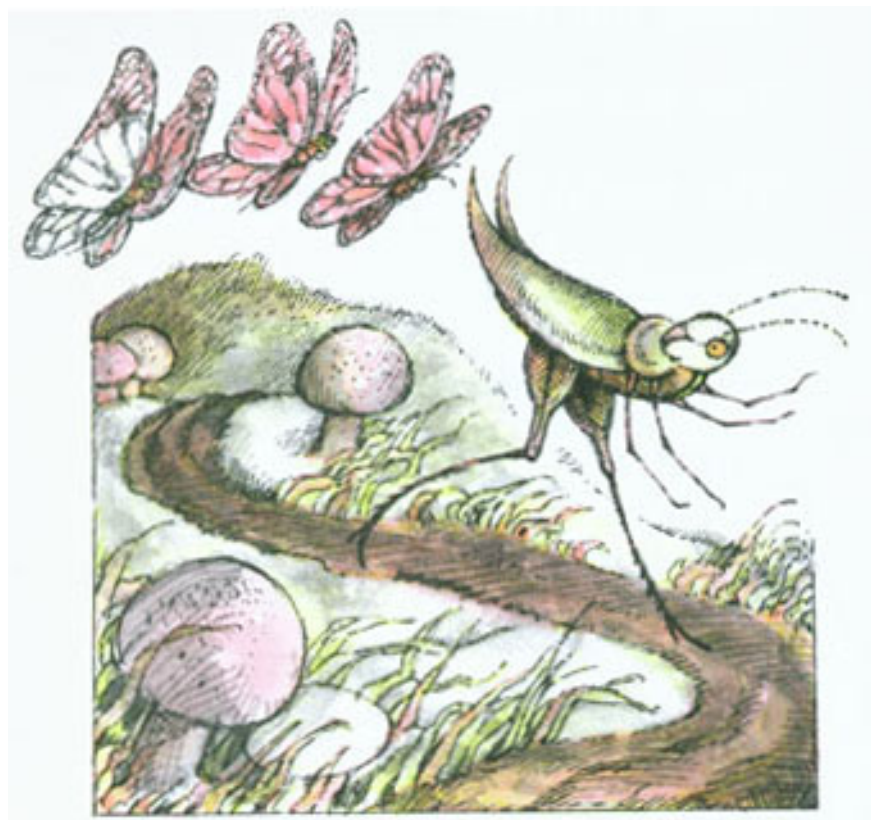
"That is too bad," said the butterflies.

"We will miss you. Grasshopper, do you really do something *different* every day of your life?"

"Always," said Grasshopper.

"Always and always!"

He said good-bye to the butterflies and walked quickly down the road.



## At Evening



In the evening Grasshopper walked slowly along the road.

The sun was going down.

The world was soft and quiet.

Grasshopper heard a loud sound.

ZOOM! Grasshopper heard another noise.

ZOOOOM!

He saw two dragonflies in the air.

"Poor Grasshopper," said the dragonflies.

"We are flying fast. You are only walking.

That is very sad."

"It is not sad," said Grasshopper.

"I like to walk."





The dragonflies flew over Grasshopper's head.  
"We can see so many things from up here," said the dragonflies.  
"All you can see is that road."  
"I like this road," said Grasshopper.  
"And I can see flowers growing along the side of the road."



"We are zipping and zooming," said the first dragonfly.

"We do not have time to look at flowers."



"I can see leaves moving in the trees," said Grasshopper.

"We are looping and spinning," said the second dragonfly.

"We do not have time to look at leaves."

"I can see the sunset over the mountains," said Grasshopper.

"What sunset?

What mountains?" asked the dragonflies.

"We are diving and dipping.

There is no time to look at sunsets and mountains."



*ZOOOOM!*

The two dragonflies raced across the sky.

Soon they were gone.

The world was quiet again.

The sky became dark. Grasshopper watched the moon rising over the land.

He watched the stars come out.

He was happy to be walking slowly down the road.







Grasshopper was tired.  
He lay down in a soft place.  
He knew that in the morning the road would still  
be there, taking him on and on to wherever he  
wanted to go.

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